

VZCZCXRO4547

OO RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHGI RUEHJO RUEHMA RUEHMR RUEHPA RUEHRN RUEHTRO
DE RUEHDK #1008 2161726
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 041726Z AUG 09
FM AMEMBASSY DAKAR
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2887
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1247
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0405
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0080
INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC

UNCLAS DAKAR 001008

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR AF/W, AF/RSA, DRL, INR/AA, IIP/S-AF AMURPHY, AF/PD
PERHNMN, AND AF/W
ECOWAS POSTS FOR PAOS
PARIS FOR ARS
USDA FAS WASHDC FOR OSTA/NTPMD NAIM

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [EFIN](#) [PINS](#) [KDEM](#) [SG](#)

SUBJECT: SENEGAL: PRESIDENT WADE ENDORSES TRANSGENETIC AGRICULTURE,
INTENDS TO SIGN A TRANSGENETIC CROPPING BILL

¶1. In a Thursday, July 22 meeting with President Wade in his office, Charge, IIP speaker Dr. Marcelline Egnin, and APHIS senior attache persuaded President Wade to sign a bill on his desk to legalize the cultivation of transgenetic crops in Senegal. Wade displayed a considerable knowledge of transgenetic cropping as a part of his more general interest in national food self sufficiency. END

SUMMARY.

EMBASSY KNOCKS ON A PRESIDENTIAL DOOR UNEXPECTEDLY OPEN TO BIOTECH CROPS

¶2. The climax to a five day (July 6-10 and 22), Embassy-initiated, IIP speaker program for Dr. Marcelline Egnin of Tuskegee University, in Dakar to participate in a USDA and Michigan State University sponsored symposium on biotechnology and biosafety, was a last moment meeting with Senegalese President Wade to persuade him to sign the National Assembly's recently passed bill allowing the cultivation of transgenetic crops in Senegal. Attending were Charge, APHIS officer, CAO, and Dr. Egnin. The President, who already knows the transgenetic brief quite well, required little persuasion. After mentioning that India is interested in planting biotech crops in Senegal, he asked Dr. Egnin if there were any obstacles to such crops in the US, to which she said no, as long as the required rigorous testing precedes the approval. University of Dakar plant researcher Mame Ousmane Sy attempted to stoke the President's competitive ambitions to African statesmanship by saying that Burkina Faso is already planting biotech crops. Charge made the dish even tastier by saying that that promulgating the law would attract foreign investment. Saying "I am not a professor. I am the manager of a small and medium sized enterprise called Senegal. I don't want to experiment. I want to go to the application phase. . . I am your man. I am your partner," Wade said that promulgating the law will be automatic.

COMMENT: SIGNING AND PLANTING

¶3. Inasmuch as President Wade sometimes promises action impulsively only to retract later on, Embassy will have to monitor the movement of this bill from the Presidency into the statute books and thereafter activity in the fields that the bill allows. Nevertheless, from 9:45 to 10:15 pm on July 22 President Wade moved his country at least in words to the forefront of the biggest advance in world agriculture since the Sixties Green Revolution.
SMITH